

hold me and ill pretend in your arms by 2moldy

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Summary:

Will is too scared to fall asleep, so Mike grabs the lantern and decides to keep him company.

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A faint ticking clicked rhythmically. He glanced over to Mike who was sleeping on the yellow couch, hair falling over his eyes and drool hanging off his chin. His arm hung lazily over the edge of the cushions, resting on the carpet. Lucas and Dustin had their sleeping bags comfortably wrapping them, protecting them from the sharp coldness of winter. Dustin's quiet snoring comforted Will somewhat but also helped him stay awake. He would soon grow annoyed of it he was sure. Lucas' limbs sprawled as far as it could stretch in the sleeping bag, his arms overlapped Dustin's. As much as they bickered at sleepovers, they'd always seemed to be comfortably sleeping next to each other like a fixed point. Will glanced at his calculator watch and attempted to read the numbers but to no avail. Complete darkness enveloped the basement, glimpses of the moon laid against the lines of furniture neatly decorating the room. Will's eyes darted to every shadow, carefully observing them until his eyes stung. He rubbed one eye at a time, refusing to close both of them at once. Will didn't wanna risk opening his eyes and seeing the demogorgon inches above him. His white knuckles gripped at his blankets, shoulders tense without him realizing.

A choked gasp startled Will, instinctively turning his head behind him. Mike's elbows propped him up above his pillow, Will could hear him breathing heavily. Just seconds later, he rubbed his eyes and a shaky frown spread on his face.

Concern furrowed his brows and Will whispered his name, "Mike?"

Mike tore his clammy hands away from his face and stared into the almost pitch black basement before realizing quickly his friend called his name. Familiarity calmed his beating heart and he sat up facing Will. The moonlight carefully framed Will, sitting hunched over and legs crossed. "Will, what are you doing awake?"

"Not tired, I guess." Discomfort stirred in his stomach as he lied.

Will's response didn't settle right with Mike and he pouted. Mike could tell Will had been lying too often ever since he came back. *"Don't push it, Mike. You don't know what it was like in that place."*

Dustin's advice from when Mike started to notice something odd with Will reminded him. Don't push it.

“Did you have a bad dream?...”

Mike's eyes widened at the question, surprised to hear it. “What? No. No, of course not.” He shook his head and bit back the truth. He didn't want to think about the fact *Liar* and *You promised* were bouncing around his head mercilessly. Now wasn't the time to dump it on anyone, especially Will.

He leaned his hand over the table and turned on a lantern his mother bought for Nancy last year. A warm light flickered throughout the room, making the outside seem pitch black. Will turned to look at Dustin and Lucas and felt relieved the light wouldn't woken them up anyways. Mike lifted the lantern by the handle and walked on his knees to Will. He winced at the roughness of the carpet before setting next to Will who looked exhausted beyond his age.

Will watched Mike and that annoying feeling in his chest came back. It felt like something warm enough to dry his mouth wrapped itself around his heart squeezing it, and it sucked because he kept feeling it around Mike. He loved Mike's freckles and the way the light danced on his cheeks. He loved Mike's little shrug and the fact he wanted to kiss him and hold his hand (in a romantic way, he decided when he overheard Nancy on the phone talking about 'the douchebag', Steve Harrington). And he still wasn't sure if these feelings really were okay, Lonnie's harsh voice would tell him otherwise every time he thought about those things.

When opportunity revealed itself in the brief silence between them, Mike wanted to beg Will to tell him the truth. Why he's been acting so weird since he got back, why he won't look him in the eye anymore.

“Are you okay?” A million more words laid on Mike's tongue, all achingly unsaid.

Will thought back to the countless times his world crumbles at the corners just to reveal the idea that maybe he never really left, and the countless times he'd find his mom's hands on his shoulders wondering

if her son still had his grip on sanity. And he always assure her, that yes, he was perfectly okay. Why wouldn't he be?

Why isn't he?

"I'm scared..." His voice cracked faintly, almost unheard.

His chest stung at the remembrance of Eleven's similar cries in his nightmare just moments and the defeated tone in Will's voice.

"I'll stay with you. S-stay up with you, I mean."

Mike held back a groan when he stumbled over his last sentence.

When Will shyly mumbled, "You don't have to." Mike reassured him awkwardly as he pulled his pillow off the couch. A quiet thump could be heard when it plopped against the floor.

"Mike?"

"Hm?"

"I still see it sometimes." Shame made itself clear in his voice, wavering and quiet. Will looked at Mike, his hair laid out on the pillow, and a look of curiosity and concern in his eyes. "The Upside Down, I see it.. flash around me. Like I never left" *and I'm not sure I did*

"Ever since you got back?"

An ashamed nod was all Will could muster, already starting to regret admitting this.

Like all the comforting and safe words Mike's mother would tell him whenever he came home crying suddenly made sense, he spoke softly, "You'll be okay. Maybe not right now but.. You will be one day."

Will leaned backwards into his pillow and tried to let go of the stress in his body.

"I hope so." His voice was smaller than the secrets that hung in the

air, lingering over the two boys.

Mike tapped the carpet before reaching over across the small space in between him and Will. He slipped his fingers through Will's and squeezed gently. Blush painted both their cheeks, surprised but content.

I'm holding hands with Mike Wheeler , the concept was enough to make Will smile genuinely for the first time in weeks. And with the sight of Will finally smiling, Mike grinned.

Minutes passed by effortlessly until they became hours. The light flickering ever so lightly, stars began to disappear in the sky. Will and Mike laid together in hushed comfort, Mike whispered about everything he could think of (straying away from certain topics, of course).

Occasionally, Will's eyelids would droop but as quickly as they closed, they snapped open and he listened like nothing had happened.

"Go to sleep, Will." Mike gently tugged Will's hand as to remind him *I'm right here*. "You're safe." He only hoped Will believed him.

And he did. For the first time, somebody in Hawkins looked at Will with something other than pity. Will looked into Mike's brown promising eyes, and he felt the familiar butterflies in his heart but this time he didn't mind it so much.

White noise began to slowly lay over them until the only thing Will could hear was the heater, Dustin's snoring, and if he was close enough, Mike's soft breathing. Will decide to inch closer to Mike; being near him was enough to erase the tension in his shoulders.

Will wished Mike could cure all of it, he had the kind of face that makes you believe that. However, right now, he's all kinds messed up in the head and it's humiliating.

But with Mike Wheeler's hand in his and the sound of his heartbeat close by, Will decided, it was more than enough for him.

Author's Note:

i love my gay sons!!! just throwing that out there

this took forever omg and this is a prompt given to me by mygaysonwill @ tumblr :)

edit: i changed the wording of a paragraph bc i felt like it was slightly ooc??